

DELAWARE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Minutes DRAFT

Misphillion Elementary School
311 Lovers Lane, Milford, DE 19963

May 16, 2019
5:00 P.M.

Members Present: Nina Lou Bunting, Candice Fifer, Vincent Lofink, Dr. Audrey Noble, Wali Rushdan II, Whitney Sweeney

Others Present: Rae Mims, Deputy Attorney General, representing the SBE; Dr. Susan Bunting, SBE, Secretary of Education; Jenna Ahner, SBE Executive Director; Dawn McHugh, SBE Administrative Assistant; Leroy Travers, DDOE; Emily Cunningham, DDOE; Brian Moore, DDOE; Sara Croce, Milford School District; Tammy Croce, DASA; Scott Whaley, Milford School District; Sharon Brittingham, UD DASL; Debbie Panchisin, Charter Network; Michael Saylor, DDOE; Shannon Holston, DDOE; Bridget Amory, Milford School District; Greg Panchisin, ASPIRA; Bianca Portal (3 Children), ASPIRA; Laura Medina (1 Child), ASPIRA; Ruth Padilla (1 Child), ASPIRA; Silvia Marenca, ASPIRA; Anderson Bradford, ASPIRA; Henry Bradford, ASPIRA; Elsie Bradford, ASPIRA; Lydia Paveloch, ASPIRA; Zayde Leah (1 Child), ASPIRA; Lilia Meredith, ASPIRA; Magda Soliwoda (1 Child and 2 Future Students), ASPIRA; Nayeli Nunez, ASPIRA; Zoar Alucin-Vega (1 Child), ASPIRA; Jazmin Perez (2 Children), ASPIRA; Malerie Cummings, ASPIRA; Korina Cummings, ASPIRA; Nancy Labanda (2 Children), ASPIRA; Lorena Dominquez, ASPIRA; Phil & Rebecca Penix-Todsen (2 Children), ASPIRA; Brian Bell, ASPIRA; Erika Gutienoz (2 Children), ASPIRA; Sarah Jefferis, ASPIRA; Eugenia Nikoliouk, ASPIRA; Francia Yops (2 Children), ASPIRA; Younes Haboussi, ASPIRA; Sean Anthony, ASPIRA; Brenda Hofman, ASPIRA; Jennifer Rodriguez, ASPIRA; Evelyn Figueroa, ASPIRA; Rachel Torres, ASPIRA; Margie Lopez Waite, ASPIRA; Olga Ruiz (1 Child), ASPIRA; Ruth Padilla, ASPIRA; Mike Reitemeyer, ASPIRA; Diana Magana, ASPIRA; Melanie Winter (2 Children), ASPIRA; William Barrera (2 Children), ASPIRA; Kathleen Chappel, ASPIRA; Ana Somoano, ASPIRA; Yelena Milla, (1 Child), ASPIRA; Howard Smith, ASPIRA; Margaret Rivera, ASPIRA; Elias Rivera, ASPIRA; Guadalupe Santiago Ramo (1 Child), ASPIRA; Silvia Pereira, ASPIRA; Adriana Lopez (3 Children), ASPIRA; Ryan Lloyd, ASPIRA; Jen Griggs, ASPIRA; Elyse Carmack, ASPIRA; Yessenia Tolentaro, ASPIRA; Ana Nataha Aragon (1 Child), ASPIRA; Maria Mediner (1 Child), ASPIRA; Beth Anne P. Giluck, ASPIRA; Joseph Romero, ASPIRA; E. DeJesus, ASPIRA; Ionel Alvaz, ASPIRA; M. Perz, ASPIRA; Marid Cortez Coruth, ASPIRA; Sharita Tampkin, ASPIRA; Nicole Florian, ASPIRA; Jeannie Negron, ASPIRA; Danna S. Morales Negor, ASPIRA; Jasmin Perez, ASPIRA; Jaclyn Perez, ASPIRA; Christopher Perez, ASPIRA.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order: Ms. Sweeney called the meeting to order at 5:03p.m.

B. Roll Call

Ms. McHugh conducted roll call for the meeting with six members present (Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Noble, Rushdan, and Sweeney).

C. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Rushdan and seconded by Mr. Lofink to approve the May 16, 2019 agenda as presented. ***The motion carried*** (6 Yes to 0 No – Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Noble, Rushdan, and Sweeney).

D. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for April 18, 2019

A motion was made by Mr. Lofink and seconded by Mr. Rushdan to approve the April 18, 2019 minutes as presented. ***The motion carried*** (6 Yes to 0 No-Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Noble, Rushdan, and Sweeney).

II. State Board Business

A. Committee Reports

Board members provided updates on recent Board business and committee participation. Ms. Sweeney thanked the Milford School District for hosting the Board's meeting. She announced that three new members have been appointed by the Governor. Ms. Sweeney discussed the Board's recent strategic planning meeting and provided information on the University of Delaware's Board of Trustees meeting. Ms. Sweeney also discussed recent meetings with P-20 Council members. Mr. Rushdan provided information on his recent attendance at the William Penn High School Senior Class Day, the University of Delaware's Students of Distinction event and the P-20 Council Literacy Subcommittee. Mrs. Bunting noted her participation in the Board's strategic planning meeting. Mr. Lofink shared information regarding his participation in Howard High School's Academy of Finance Advisory Committee. He also shared that he attended the Senate committee hearing for new Board member, Reverend Provey Powell. Dr. Noble provided an update on her attendance at the P-20 Council Literacy Subcommittee and the National Governors Association Early Childhood Education meeting.

B. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Ahner provided an update on recent activities in her office. She noted that the June 20th State Board Meeting would be held in the Townsend Building in Dover.

III. Secretary's Report

Dr. Susan Bunting provided her report, highlighting the Department's work and visits within the last month.

IV. Presentations

A. Milford School District Spotlight

Sara Croce, Chief Financial Officer, Milford School District and Jason Peel, Director of Human Resources and School Climate, Milford School District provided a presentation about work underway in the school district. Ms. Croce provided an overview of the core values, key focus areas, and demographics of the district. She discussed programs and partnerships in their elementary schools. Mr. Peel provided information regarding programs underway at Milford Central Academy and Milford High School. He highlighted the reorganization of their school into majors and discussed career pathways. Mr. Peel shared information regarding the ability to "double major" and the celebration of college/career decisions. Mr. Peel also discussed a partnership underway with the Polytech School District.

Board members asked questions regarding Milford's School of Modern Studies and about the reorganization of the high school into "schools". Board members also asked how school counselors are utilized to inform student decisions on coursework and how the district is sharing information regarding work underway with other schools.

B. Delaware Autism Program

Emily Cunningham, Chief of Staff/Policy Advisor, Delaware Department of Education, updated the Board on work underway to develop the MOU between the Christina School District and the Delaware Autism Program and the job description for the program's Executive Director. Board members asked questions regarding the hiring timeline.

The MOU and job description will be brought to the State Board of Education for approval at a future meeting.

V. Charter Schools

A. Las Americas ASPIRA Academy Major Modification (For Action)

Ms. Sweeney provided a summary of the Board's conversation regarding Las Americas ASPIRA Academy at the Board's April meeting.

Mr. Leroy Travers, Charter School Office, Delaware Department of Education, presented the major modification information for Las Americas ASPIRA Academy that was tabled at the April 18th State Board meeting.

Dr. Susan Bunting read her recommendation presented at the April meeting. Dr. Bunting accepted the recommendation of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) to approve the major modification with the following condition:

1. The final lease agreement will include a contingency that allows Las Americas ASPIRA Academy and the property owner to re-negotiate the lease in good faith should the school's enrollment not materialize at the projected rate.

Board members asked whether Mr. Travers had received any information from the school regarding the recommended contingency. He indicated that no additional information had been received concerning this contingency.

Board members asked for information regarding the number of students who begin in elementary school and continue into middle school.

Dr. Noble read her statement regarding the financial issues that concern her and stated that she cannot support a major modification at this time. She has concerns about the impact the expansion could have on the existing K-8 program. She noted that opening a new school is a significant undertaking that will require a new building, extensive new academic programming, hiring instructional and support staff, and a new organizational structure. She also has concerns about the school's ability to meet its enrollment capacity.

The Board discussed the strength of the current program, the community's involvement, and the leadership of the school. Board members recognized the many families and staff who traveled to the meeting to support the major modification request.

The Board discussed the desire to strengthen the academic and financial frameworks used in the approval, renewal and modification process. Board members expressed their frustration in not being able to ask additional questions that are not included in the record.

Board members thanked Chuck Longfellow for his participation in the April Board meeting. Board members expressed support for the major modification, noting that their vote is based on the recommendations of the Secretary, Mr. Longfellow, CSAC, and the DDOE Finance Office.

A motion to approve the major modification for Las Americas ASPIRA Academy as presented was made by Mr. Lofink and seconded by Mr. Rushdan. *The motion carried* (5 Yes to 1 No – Yes- Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Rushdan and Sweeney; No-Noble).

B. Monthly Charter School Update

Mr. Travers provided an update on Design Thinking Academy. The school has relinquished its charter. It will stay open until the end of the school year, and seniors will graduate. He provided information on work underway to prepare students to enroll in other schools next year.

Board members expressed concern with the enrollment and financial issues of charter schools in recent years. They asked Secretary Bunting and Mr. Travers to consider opportunities to improve the approval, renewal and modification process. Members noted that there is information in the code that should be included in the formal record for new applications, renewals, and major modifications.

Board members asked if there were signs regarding DTA's enrollment concerns that could have been seen sooner. Mr. Travers provided information regarding the CSAC process, enrollment plans, and leadership changes at the school. Members asked questions regarding processes in place to identify issues. They also expressed interest in looking at recent school closures to identify signs and commonalities that could be addressed earlier, such as staff and leadership changes at the school. Board members suggested considering changes to the auditing process and standards.

Mr. Travers shared that Odyssey Charter School has been placed on formal review. The letter to the school and the timeline for CSAC was shared with the Board. CSAC will conduct an investigation, and a recommendation will be made to the Board at the July meeting.

Board members asked how this has impacted students. Board members asked questions regarding what information is available to the public and what information will be posted for review during the CSAC process. Board members noted that it is important for the Board to share their questions with Dr. Noble for consideration during the CSAC process.

Mr. Travers provided an update regarding the federal Charter School Program Grant. He shared information regarding six schools that have expressed interest in grants for expansion, replication, or new schools.

Board members asked questions regarding the ability to use some of the grant funding to manage the grant. Members also asked about plans to use the grant to improve the authorization process.

Mr. Travers shared information regarding upcoming work, including working with the Board to update the financial framework, making sure code requirements are captured by CSAC, and using the academic framework most effectively. His office will review and consider the authorizing processes in other states.

VI. Regulations

A. Department of Education Regulations for Discussion and Action

1. Regulation 108A – Administrator Appraisal Process Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II) Revised (For Action)

Emily Cunningham, Chief of Staff/Policy Advisor, Department of Education, provided an overview of the regulation.

Board members shared that they are pleased to see this change and. appreciated the thorough presentation of background and materials at the previous meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Noble and seconded by Mrs. Bunting to approve Regulation 108A-Administrator Appraisal Process Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II) Revised, as presented. ***The motion carried*** (6 Yes to 0 No – Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Noble, Rushdan, and Sweeney).

2. Regulation 292 – Post Secondary Institutions and Degree Granting Institutions of Higher Education (For Action)

Emily Cunningham, Chief of Staff/Policy Advisor, Department of Education, provided an overview of the regulation.

Board members noted that it was difficult to understand the changes made to the regulation due to the way the information was presented. Board members asked questions relating to accreditation and online instruction. The Board recommended that the changes are more thoroughly outlined in the future.

A motion to table Regulation 292 was made by Mr. Rushdan and seconded by Mrs. Bunting. ***The motion carried*** (6 Yes to 0 No – Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Noble, Rushdan, and Sweeney).

3. Regulation 106A - Teacher Appraisal Process Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II) Revised (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 106A, which is currently posted for public comment.

Board members asked if the change in the administrator evaluation process effects the teacher appraisal process.

4. Regulation 107A – Specialist Appraisal Process Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II) Revised (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 107A, which is currently posted for public comment.

B. PSB Regulations for Discussion or Action

1. Regulation 1510 – Issuance of Initial License (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 1510, which is currently posted for public comment.

2. Regulation 1511-Issuance and Renewal of Continuing License (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 1511, which is currently posted for public comment.

3. Regulation 1549 – Dance Teacher (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 1549, which is currently posted for public comment.

4. Regulation 1558 – Theater Teacher (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 1558, which is currently posted for public comment.

5. Regulation 1560 – Art Teacher (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 1560, which is currently posted for public comment.

6. Regulation 1563 – Music Teacher (For Information)

Ms. Sweeney provided information regarding Regulation 1563, which is currently posted for public comment.

C. Public Comment on Regulations

1. No public comments were received.

VII. Formal Public Comment

Margie Lopez Waite, Head of Las Americas ASPIRA Academy, provided comment that she was happy that the major modification had been approved. She encouraged the Board to get to know and visit districts and charter schools. She also suggested that the Board visit schools as a part of the approval process. Ms. Lopez Waite requested that the Board consider hosting a Board meeting at a charter school.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Bunting and seconded by Mr. Lofink. ***The motion carried*** (6 Yes to 0 No – Bunting, Fifer, Lofink, Noble, Rushdan, and Sweeney).

The meeting adjourned at 6:54p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan S. Bunting, Ed.D.
Executive Secretary and
Secretary of Education